

General Assembly
210 Capitol Ave
Hartford, CT 06106
March 9, 2022

Dear Members of the Human Services Committee of Ct General Assembly:

My name is Marvia McDonald-Dias, and I am a registered nurse from Manchester. I am also a student at the University of Saint Joseph, pursuing a Master of Science degree in nursing, becoming a psychiatric mental health nurse practitioner.

I stand in support of SB284: AN ACT INCREASING THE AGE FROM EIGHT TO EIGHTEEN YEARS FOR AN INCOME-ELIGIBLE PERSON TO OBTAIN MEDICAL ASSISTANCE REGARDLESS OF IMMIGRATION STATUS. Expanding access to HUSKY up to age 18 regardless of immigration status is an essential step in making sure our immigrant community has access to the healthcare we all need and deserve. But our work doesn't end with expanding access up to age 18; we need to open access to HUSKY and healthcare to all immigrants of any age, including parents and adults.

As a registered nurse working in acute care for over 15 years and a psychiatric mental health nurse practitioner student, I have served children with mental illness. Children older than eight years old require the same health care as those below this age. I have seen first-hand the need for health insurance for all immigrant children. Many immigrant families have low-paying jobs, so while providers may be willing to take cash for service, many immigrant families cannot afford this cost.

With the impact of global crises such as the Corona -19 pandemic and war, children of all ages and immigration backgrounds increasingly require mental health care. Without insurance, these children may suffer emotional pain leading to poor prospects for their future. Subsequently, many immigrant children will remain in the United States for all their lives and need primary health care services. If they have no access to affordable healthcare, they risk becoming adults with chronic diseases that will ultimately stress the healthcare system even more.

I support S.B. 284, and I ask the committee to support and pass this legislation. Looking forward, I ask the committee to work towards opening access to all community members in CT regardless of age or status.

Thank you for your time,
Marvia McDonald-Dias